

OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF LANDS ACT

[PUBLIC—No. 212—83RD CONGRESS, PASSED AUGUST 7, 1953]

[H.R. 5134]

An Act To provide among other things that the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act be extended to employees working on the Outer Continental Shelf in the exploration and the development of natural resources.

The pertinent parts of the law are quoted below, 43 United States Code, section 1333, subsection (b) and (c) :

“(b) The United States district courts shall have original jurisdiction of cases and controversies arising out of or in connection with any operations conducted on the outer Continental Shelf for the purpose of exploring for, developing, removing or transporting by pipeline the natural resources, or involving rights to the natural resources of the subsoil and seabed of the outer Continental Shelf, and proceedings with respect to any such case or controversy may be instituted in the judicial district in which any defendant resides or may be found, or in the judicial district of the adjacent State nearest the place where the cause of action arose.

“(c) With respect to disability or death of an employee resulting from any injury occurring as the result of operations described in subsection (b) of this section, compensation shall be payable under the provisions of the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act. For the purposes of the extension of the provisions of the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act under this section—

“(1) the term ‘employee’ does not include a master or member of a crew of any vessel, or an officer or employee of the United States or any agency thereof or of any State or foreign government, or of any political subdivision thereof;

“(2) the term ‘employer’ means an employer any of whose employees are employed in such operations; and

“(3) the term ‘United States’ when used in a geographical sense includes the outer Continental Shelf and artificial islands and fixed structures thereon.”

DEFINITIONS

The term "outer Continental Shelf" is defined in the Act, section 1331 (a), as follows:

"(a) The term 'outer Continental Shelf' means all submerged lands lying seaward and outside of the area of lands beneath navigable waters as defined in section 1301 of this title, and of which the subsoil and seabed appertain to the United States and are subject to its jurisdiction and control";

Section 1301 of the "Submerged Lands Act" defines "lands beneath navigable waters" as follows:

"When used in this chapter—

"(a) The term 'lands beneath navigable waters' means—

"(1) all lands within the boundaries of each of the respective States which are covered by non-tidal waters that were navigable under the laws of the United States at the time such State became a member of the Union, or acquired sovereignty over such lands and waters thereafter, up to the ordinary high water mark as heretofore or hereafter modified by accretion, erosion, and reliction;

"(2) all lands permanently or periodically covered by tidal waters up to but not above the line of mean high tide and seaward to a line three geographical miles distant from the coast line of each such State and to the boundary line of each such State where in any case such boundary as it existed at the time such State became a member of the Union, or as heretofore approved by Congress, extends seaward (or into the Gulf of Mexico) beyond three geographical miles, and

"(3) all filled in, made, or reclaimed lands which formerly were lands beneath navigable waters, as hereinabove defined;

"(b) The term 'boundaries' includes the seaward boundaries of a State or its boundaries in the Gulf of Mexico or any of the Great Lakes as they existed at the time such State became a member of the Union, or as heretofore approved by the Congress, or as extended or confirmed pursuant to section 1312 of this title but in no event shall the term 'boundaries' or the term 'lands beneath navigable waters' be interpreted as extending from the coast line more than three geographical miles into the Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific Ocean, or more than three marine leagues into the Gulf of Mexico;

"(c) The term 'coast line' means the line of ordinary low water along that portion of the coast which is in direct contact with the open sea and the line marking the seaward limit of inland waters; . . ."

shall be determined as provided in section 1 of this Act and this section. Such liability shall be exclusive and in the place of all other liability of the United States or such instrumentality to the employee, his legal representative, spouse, dependents, next of kin, and any person otherwise entitled to recover damages from the United States or such nonappropriated fund instrumentality on account of such disability or death in any direct judicial proceedings, in a civil action, or in admiralty, or by proceedings whether administrative or judicial, under any workmen's compensation law or under any Federal tort liability statute.